

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01

NIC-01 SAJ-01 NEA-09 /091 W  
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P R 011412Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9761

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL EDINBURGH

AMCONSUL LIVERPOOL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 04861

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, UK

SUBJECT: THE SHELEPIN AFFAIR - THE CONQUERING HERO "SLIPS  
INTO BRITAIN"

REF: LONDON 4430

1. SUMMARY: ALEXANDR SHELEPIN, HEAD OF THE AUCCTU,  
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MEMBER OF THE POLITBURO AND FORMER KGB CHIEF, ARRIVED

LAST NIGHT, MARCH 31, TWO DAYS EARLIER THAN EXPECTED, TO SOMETHING SOMEWHAT LESS THAN A TUMULTUOUS WELCOME. IN FACT, THOUGH HIS SPECIAL AEROFLOT JET ARRIVED AT HEATHROW WITH A REPORTEDLY SCANT 40 MINUTES WARNING TO THE CONTROL TOWER, AND THERE WAS AN OBVIOUS ATTEMPT TO KEEP THE ARRIVAL SECRET, IT WAS SOON MADE KNOWN ON EVENING TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCASTS AND IN TODAY'S PRESS REPORTS. SHELEPIN AND HIS PARTY WERE MET BY TUC GENERAL SECRETARY LEN MURRAY AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR LUNKOV AND WERE DRIVEN TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY, WHERE HE WAS MET BY JEERING DEMONSTRATORS AND WHERE HE WILL BE HEADQUARTERED DURING HIS LONDON STAY. A DINNER ATTENDED BY TUC LEADERS MURRAY, JACK JONES, AND TOM JACKSON (OF THE POSTAL WORKERS) WAS HELD AT THE SOVIET EMBASSY LAST NIGHT. (THE SOVIET GROUP APPEARS TO BE SMALLER THAN EXPECTED, PERHAPS SHORN OF SEVERAL OF THE SOVIET SECURITY GUARDS.)  
END SUMMARY.

2. THE ARRIVAL DOMINATED THE FRONT PAGES THIS MORNING (APRIL 1). HEADLINES INCLUDED "INSTANT DEMO FOR SHELEPIN" (GUARDIAN); "SHELEPIN SNEAKS IN" (THE SUN) "YOU'RE NOT WELCOME, COMRADE" (DAILY MAIL); "ANGER AS SHELEPIN STEALS IN -- AIRPORT MAN SPOIL MURRAY'S SECRECY" (DAILY TELEGRAPH); AND BERNARD LEVIN (THE TIMES) BEGAN HIS COLUMN: "THERE ARE MURDERERS AMONG US ". YESTERDAY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DEMONSTRATED IN HYDE PARK AGAINST THE VISIT AND THEN A MUCH SMALLER NUMBER OF THEM MARCHED TO THE SOVIET EMBASSY, IN TIME TO "GREET" THE HEAVILY GUARDED SOVIET ENTOURAGE, APPARENTLY UNAWARE OF THE EARLY ARRIVAL. (AT THE EMBASSY FOR A CONTINUING VIGIL TWO RUSSIAN WOMEN, MRS. BATAYA TSITLIONOK AND MRS. ITA NASHPITZ, WERE PROTESTING THE REPORTED SENTENCE BY EXILE OF THEIR TWO SONS, BORIS TSITLIONOK AND MARK NASHPITZ, FOR DEMONSTRATING AGAINST THE REFUSAL OF THE SOVIETS TO GRANT THEM VISAS.) EMIGRE, JEWISH AND OTHER GROUPS PLAN TO CONTINUE THEIR PROTESTS AGAINST THE SOVIET VISITORS WHEREVER THEY CAN FIND THEM, FOR THE TUC CONTINUES TO KEEP THE ITINERARY AS CLOSELY GUARDED AS THEY CAN.

3. WHAT WAS EXPECTED TO HAVE BEEN A RELATIVELY QUIET  
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TRADE UNION EXCHANGE TO UNDERSCORE THE TUC'S "EAST-WEST" LABOR DETENTE APPEARS TO BE A FAILURE BEFORE IT EVEN BEGINS. FROM THE MOMENT THE TUC INVITATION BECAME KNOWN -- SEVERAL WEEKS AGO -- THE VISIT HAS PROVEN A DEEP EMBARRASMENT TO THE TUC -- ONE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MUST BE SHARING, PARTICULARLY SINCE HAROLD WILSON'S VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION IS OF SUCH RECENT MEMORY. FOR WEEKS, NEWS, EDITORIAL AND READERS' COLUMNS HAVE BEEN FILLED WITH

DETAILS -- MUCH OF IT UNFAVORABLE -- ABOUT SHELEPIN, OR HIS SINISTER BACKGROUND AND, ALTHOUGH TO A LESSER EXTENT, THE DEFECTS OF SOVIET TRADE UNIONISM. PARLIAMENTARY PROTESTS WERE ALSO MADE AND OVER A HUNDRED MPS SIGNED A WRITTEN PROTEST AGAINST THE VISIT. THE HOME SECRETARY ROY JENKINS, WAS CONSTRAINED TO POINT OUT IN THE COMMONS THAT GRANTING A VISA DID NOT SIGNIFY APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL. FOREIGN SECRETARY JAMES CALLAGHAN CALLED ON THE PUBLIC TO GIVE THE VISITORS A POLITE RECEPTION AND PRIME MINISTER WILSON MADE IT CLEAR HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE ADVERSE REACTION TO THE VISIT.

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INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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SAJ-01 NEA-09 /091 W

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P R 011412Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9762

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN

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4. THERE IS INDEED SOMETHING VERY LUDICROUS ABOUT A SO-CALLED TRADE UNION GROUP ARRIVING, IF NOT IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, UNDER GREAT STEALTH INTO THE COUNTRY, UNDER HEAVY GUARD AS IT WERE, WITH A SECRET ITINERARY AND WITH A FREE PRESS KEPT AT A SAFE DISTANCE. THERE IS NO DOUBT  
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THAT THE TUC DID NOT TRULY ANTICIPATE THE DEPTH AND EXTENT OF THE REACTION. LEAVING ASIDE THE EXPECTED REACTION OF JEWISH AND EMIGRE GROUPS, THERE WERE INDEED FEW CLEAR VOICES OF WELCOME, EVEN FROM THE LEFT-WING. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT SHELEPIN'S PAST HISTORY IN THE KGB PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE SHARPNESS OF THE RESPONSE BUT IT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF THE SOVIET TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN WHICH IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A KGB CHIEF TO BECOME A TRADE UNION LEADER.

5. WHAT THE "SHELEPIN AFFAIR" DOES TO THE TUC'S FUTURE "DRANG NOCH OSTEN" POLICY REMAINS TO BE SEEN. FROM CONVERSATIONS WE HAD PRIOR TO THE "SHELEPIN AFFAIR" WITH TUC OFFICIALS, IT WAS CLEAR THAT THEY WERE TRYING TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY FORWARD IN THIS RESPECT. FOR EXAMPLE, ALTHOUGH NO PERMANENT MACHINERY OR SECRETARIAT WAS SET UP AFTER THE RECENT EAST-WEST EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFERENCE IN GENEVA, THESE OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THAT THERE IS AN UNDERSTANDING TO SET UP TECHNICAL WORKING COMMITTEES TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, WHICH WERE THE SUBJECT OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THE TUC MAY TRY TO PICK UP THE PIECES OF EAST-WEST LABOR DETENTE THROUGH THESE INNOCUOUS -- ALTHOUGH ONLY OSTENSIBLY -- FORMS OF ACTIVITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE REACTION TO THE VISIT MAY SET UP SERIOUS QUESTIONING WITHIN THE RANK AND FILE OF THE BRITISH TRADE UNION MOVEMENT ABOUT THE WHOLE STRUCTURE OF TUC EFFORTS TO MOVE CLOSER TO EASTERN EUROPE. WILLY-NILLY, ONE FACE OF COMMUNIST TRADE UNIONISM -- NOT A VERY HAPPY SYMBOL OF IT -- HAS BEEN PERSONIFIED BY ALEXANDR SHELEPIN. IT CANNOT HELP BUT HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON TUC OBJECTIVES.

6. AS FOR THE GOVERNMENT, DESPITE KEEPING ITS DISTANCE FROM THE VISIT, IT MUST UNDOUBTEDLY SHARE IN THE EMBARRASSMENT OF THE TUC. SHELEPIN IS, AFTER ALL, A MEMBER

OF THE SOVIET POLITBURO, AND IT MUST BE VERY DIFFICULT  
FOR SOVIET LEADERS TO UNDERSTAND WHY ONE OF ITS REPRESENTATIVES -- ONE WHOSE NAME HAS FREQUENTLY BEEN MENTIONED AS A POSSIBLE BREZHNEV SUCCESSOR, IS GREETED AT THE WORST WITH HATRED AND AT THE BEST WITH SUCH COLDNESS IN THE UK.

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